Conservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday, September 8, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Town Hall: Second Floor Meeting Room
173 Main Street Groton, MA
OPTION TO JOIN REMOTELY

Present: Chair: John Smigelski, Bruce Easom, Peter Morrison, Olin Lathrop, Ben Wolfe, Larry Hurley

Others Present: Charlotte Steeves, Conservation Administrator

The meeting opened at 6:30 PM. The meeting was recorded and will be available for viewing on the Groton Channel.

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1. APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS

6:30 PM: Continued Public Hearing- Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 162 Common Street- DEP# 169-1300

- **Presentation:** No applicant was present. Administrator Steeves listed the items still needed from the last meeting and reported that the Commission is still waiting to hear how the waterline would be run and if both parcels needed to be considered together for their overall impact on the wetlands. She added that no evidence of flooding had been received from the abutters. Commissioner Easom stated that the Commission is also waiting on an updated plan showing the driveway access at the location of the existing cart path.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that during the site walk, the Commission saw an area that he suspects floods every once in a while but that there was not enough evidence on the ground to conclude that without historical evidence from the abutters.
    - A member of the public asked to comment on the flooding evidence. Chair Smigelski stated that he did not want to take new information without the applicant present. Commissioner Morrison stated that the applicant had asked for a continuance, so accepting new information would be a slippery slope. Commissioner Lathrop disagreed and asked the member of the public to share the information with him separately.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to September 22, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Outcome:** Continued to September 22, 2026.

General Business: Approve Order of Conditions- Cow Pond Brook Playing Fields- DEP# 169-1291

- **Presentation:** The draft order of conditions was read, and it included the standard conditions and the special conditions, with two added in perpetuity: the care and custody of Parcel 249-51 would be permanently transferred to the Conservation Commission, and the access road on Parcel 249-57 would be permanently closed and left to rewild. The post-construction condition was also changed so that only non-biodegradable erosion controls have to be removed before the applicant applies for a certificate of compliance.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Easom asked if transferring the care and custody of a parcel to the Commission would require a vote of Town Meeting. Administrator Steeves stated that a similar transfer of town owned land required a Town Meeting article in the past. Commissioner Morrison stated that the condition could stay in the order, and the order could not be closed out until Town Meeting voted on it.
    - Commissioner Easom and Commissioner Lathrop stated that they would be more comfortable having the transfer happen before construction begins, since the Commission would have no leverage once the project is built. The Commission agreed to move the condition into the pre-construction section. Commissioner Lathrop noted that the order does not require the transfer but that it is a condition of doing the project.
    - Commissioner Easom asked Administrator Steeves to check with the Town Manager about getting the transfer onto the Town Meeting warrant. Administrator Steeves stated that it may be too late, and Commissioner Easom stated that the warrant can still be reopened.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to issue an order of conditions under the Wetlands Protection Act for DEP# 169-1291, with the standard and special conditions as read and the transfer of care and custody of Parcel 249-51 moved to the pre-construction conditions.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to issue an order of conditions under the Groton Wetlands Protection Bylaw for DEP# 169-1291, including the transfer of care and custody of Parcel 249-51 before construction and the permanent closure of the access road on Parcel 249-57.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Orders of conditions issued under both the Wetlands Protection Act and the Groton bylaw. The transfer of the parcel must happen before construction begins.

6:45 PM: Encroachment on Walker Cox Conservation Area

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that the property owner's engineer was supposed to attend to go over the planting plan but was not present.
- **Discussion:**
    - It was stated that the plant names on the planting plan are mixed up with the scientific names and common names not matching. The plan needs to be corrected before it can be approved. It was also stated that some of the selected plants, such as red maple, would not do well on a dry exposed site.
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that this has been going on for about a year and that the Commission has been patient, so the property owner needs to be at the next meeting. Commissioner Easom suggested reminding them that the Commission may discuss issuing fines, and Commissioner Lathrop agreed.
- **Outcome:** Administrator Steeves will share the feedback on the planting plan with the property owner and remind them that the Commission can issue fines.

Committee Updates: Approve Letter of Support for Cow Pond Fields Community Preservation Committee Project

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that she had drafted a letter of support from the Commission for the Cow Pond Brook project's application to the Community Preservation Committee.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that he is not in favor of the project because he believes it costs too much and the money is coming out of the wrong fund. He stated that he was willing to say the Commission has no objection to the project on environmental grounds, but did not want to endorse the project itself. Commissioner Easom agreed that the environmental side is the only thing the Commission can weigh in on and stated that it is up to Town Meeting to decide if the project is a good idea.
    - Commissioner Lathrop objected to the letter stating that the access road will be permanently closed as part of this project, since that has been planned since 2008. Commissioner Morrison stated that the order of conditions now guarantees the closure in writing, and Commissioner Easom and Commissioner Morrison stated that they were okay leaving it in the letter.
    - A motion was made and seconded to issue the letter of support as drafted, and it passed 4-2, with Chair Smigelski and Commissioner Lathrop opposed. Chair Smigelski stated that he was uncomfortable supporting the whole project and was concerned that the letter would be read as the Commission endorsing it. Commissioner Morrison stated that if this is the only way to get the road closed and the new road built, the Commission should support it.
    - It was suggested that the letter instead should state that the Commission voted to support the environmental benefits that will come from the project, rather than the project as a whole. Chair Smigelski and Commissioner Lathrop stated that they could support that wording.

- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to reconsider the vote.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the revised letter stating that the Commission supports the environmental benefits of the Cow Pond Brook project.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** The revised letter, supporting the environmental benefits of the project was approved.

7:00 PM: Continued Public Hearing- Request for Determination of Applicability- Trail Work at 245 Lowell Road

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that the Commission is still waiting on the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act checklist from the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, and she hopes to have it for the next meeting.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to September 22, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Continued to September 22, 2026.

7:05 PM: Discussion: Invasive Plant Removal at Groton School Lower Playing Fields

- **Presentation:** A representative of Groton School stated that an area in the 50-foot buffer that the school previously agreed to stop mowing and let go back to a natural state has been taken over by invasive plants. They stated that the school would like to get rid of the invasives by mowing and overseeding with the two seed mixes on the plant list provided, one wildflower and one native grass and that the area would be mowed a few times during the first year until the new plants are established, then go back to seasonal mowing. The representative stated that the original work was done under a request for determination of applicability so there is no order of conditions that needs to be amended, but the school wanted to make sure the Commission was on board.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that some of the plants named as invasive in the school's earlier letter, such as Virginia creeper, are actually native and helpful. Rather than approve a specific plant list, he stated that he would be fine with the school removing anything on the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group list and planting anything native.
    - Commissioner Easom stated that mowing is not selective and that without targeted removal the invasives will win. The representative stated that the native plants on the list would actually establish stronger roots with mowing, and that the plan includes removing existing invasives by hand.

        - Commissioner Lathrop stated that he would be okay with mowing on or after November 1st each year since most native plants are dormant by then.
    - **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to allow Groton School to remove any plant listed as invasive, likely invasive, or potentially invasive by the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group, and to plant any native species.
    - **Vote**: All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
    - **Outcome:** Groton School may remove invasive plants and replant with native species, with mowing on or after November 1st each year.

7:15 PM: Discussion- Moulton Turtle Nesting Site

- **Presentation:** The representative stated that he had written to the Commission a while ago asking if it would act as escrow agent for the turtle nesting site, as it has for another project. He stated that since he did not hear back, the Groton Conservation Trust has agreed to act as escrow agent instead so no action is needed from the Commission.
- While the item was open, he asked about a separate matter that was not on the agenda. He stated that there is a parcel of about five acres off Cardinal Lane, across the street from land the Commission already owns, that the Commission holds a conservation restriction on. He stated that the owner would like to gift it to the Commission. He stated that the parcel would stay subject to an easement for a shared septic system serving three homes, and that it is a better solution for the Commission to own it than the homeowners.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that he had thought the Commission already owned the parcel and that when he did an encroachment walk there, he found encroachment all over the place. Chair Smigelski stated that the encroachment should be cleared up before the Commission considers taking it.
    - Commissioner Lathrop asked if the Audubon Society might want the land since it is next to their property. The representative stated that he could ask them.
    - Commissioner Easom stated that owning buffer strips behind homes turns the Commission into environmental police. Commissioner Lathrop added that they should have granite bounds at regular intervals.
- **Outcome:** The representative will look into the encroachment and come back to the Commission at a later meeting.

Land Management & Acquisition: Approve Stewardship Plan for Gibbet Hill

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that the stewardship plan was updated because the restoration of Bancroft's Castle had to be added to the conservation restriction which the Commission shares with the state. She stated that the draft has gone back and forth between the Historical Commission, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Commission, and that the main change is a new section on maintenance of the castle.
- **Discussion:**

    - Several Commissioners stated that they had not been able to find the plan in the shared folder before the meeting. Administrator Steeves stated that she had forgotten to move it into the current folder, and the changes were reviewed on screen.
    - Commissioner Lathrop read through the castle section, which allows the property owner to do maintenance on the castle, but requires that the conservation restriction holders be notified in writing ahead of time for any project over $25,000 along with a report from a qualified structural engineer.
    - Commissioner Easom and Commissioner Lathrop stated that they were fine with the change.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the stewardship plan for Gibbet Hill as presented.
- **Vote**: All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome: S**tewardship plan for Gibbet Hill approved.

Approve Invoices

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that an invoice for preventive maintenance on a generator at Williams Barn had been passed around Town Hall with no one claiming it, and she wanted to check if it belonged to the Commission.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Easom stated that he is on the Williams Barn Committee and that the barn has no generator. He stated that the invoice should not be signed. He suggested that it may belong to the Water Department since they have a chlorine injection site near the barn.
- **Outcome:** The generator invoice was not signed, and Administrator Steeves will check with the Water Department. The Commission's regular invoices were presented for signature.

7:25 PM: Continued Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 60 Valley Road- DEP# PENDING

- **Presentation:** The applicant's representative stated that they are still waiting on a DEP file number and on revised plans from the engineer, but that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has given its approval to proceed. He went over the Commission's requests from the last meeting. He stated that the expanded shed will be taken off the plan and replaced with a shed the same size as the original and in a different location. He stated that the driveway would only be resurfaced within its existing footprint, and that the engineer will provide a drainage analysis. He stated that the columns at the entrance are not in the wetlands and that the owners want them for a security gate because they have animals and small children. He also asked if the Commission would accept the culvert being replaced later under a separate notice of intent.

- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that it was his understanding the Commission said no to any shed, since it would be a new structure within 100 feet. He stated that he did not have a problem with paving the driveway since gravel lets very little water through anyway, but that he wants to know where the water will go. He stated that the culvert should be fixed as part of this filing since there is no point paving the driveway and then tearing it up to replace the culvert.
    - Commissioner Easom stated that he remembered that the shed would be removed as mitigation for the other work done on the site. He suggested moving the security gate closer to the house, near the culvert.
    - Commissioner Morrison stated that the abutting land owned by the Groton Conservation Trust has a road that people have used as a trail for years, and that access has been blocked off by the property owners or contractors, with trail users being told not to use it. He stated that a gate where it is now proposed would also block the trail. The representative stated that this was the first he had heard of it and would look into it.
    - It was stated that the driveway and parked vehicles appear to extend onto Trust property, and the Commission asked for a plan showing the surveyed property lines in relation to the Trust land.
    - The representative stated that his notes from the last meeting said the Commission would allow a shed the same size as the original if it was moved out of the buffer. Commissioner Lathrop, Commissioner Easom, and Commissioner Morrison stated that the shed was meant to come down as mitigation, since there is no other mitigation on the site.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to September 22, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Continued to September 22, 2026.

7:35 PM: Continued Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 28 Mountain Lakes Trail- DEP# 169-1299

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that the applicant requested a continuance.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to September 22, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Continued to September 22, 2026.

7:45 PM: Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 24 Island Pond Road- DEP# PENDING

- **Presentation:** The applicant is seeking approval for a deck that was built without a permit. The applicant stated that a DEP file number has now been issued. Administrator

Steeves stated that the Commission had asked to see the distance between the stream and the deck which was looked at during the site walk.

- **Discussion:**
  - Commissioner Easom stated that during the site walk the Commission found that the area to the east of the applicant's parcel belongs to the town and looks to be heavily used. He stated that the boundary should be found and that area should be left to rewild. The applicant stated that they would remove the wood and other items stored there.
  - Commissioner Lathrop stated that there are two separate issues. The first is the unpermitted deck, and the Commission is looking for mitigation on the applicant's property so the deck can stay. The second is encroachment onto Conservation Commission land, which also needs to be fixed. He stated that natural wood can be left to rot in place, but that anything like a pallet should be removed. He also stated that crushed stone should be put under the deck to stop erosion, but that this is part of building the deck and not mitigation. The applicant stated that they had thought they were supposed to hold off on the crushed stone.
  - Commissioner Lathrop suggested that rewilding the area on the applicant's land that was cleared to build the deck could count as mitigation, with the size based on the deck's square footage, and that areas closer to the wetland are more valuable. He stated that the property line has to be confirmed first.
  - Commissioner Morrison suggested that the applicant pay for a survey and bounds as mitigation, since it would save the town money, and that a small fence along with conservation markers could also help. Commissioner Lathrop disagreed, stating that money is not mitigation and that he wants to see something with a real environmental benefit. The applicant stated that they plan to replant the cleared area anyway and asked if the Commission could pay for half of the survey. Commissioner Easom stated that the town should pay for surveying its own land.
  - Commissioner Easom suggested rewilding the area east of the driveway with native seed and conservation markers along the top of the slope behind the deck. It was also suggested that native seed be added to the area that was recently covered with sod.
  - It was agreed that the applicant should come back with a map and a mitigation proposal once the survey is done and that the Commission would not rush them while the survey is pending.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to get quotes for a survey of parcels with granite bounds installed sticking up six inches.
- **Vote**: All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to October 13, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome: C**ontinued to October 13, 2026 pending the survey and a mitigation proposal from the applicant.

7:55 PM: Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 0 Wyman Road- DEP# PENDING

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that this hearing needs to be continued because the DEP file number has not been issued yet. She stated that the Commission's only comment so far was to use a conservation seed mix, and that the Commission still needs to see if DEP has any comments.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to September 22, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Continued to September 22, 2026.

8:05 PM: Public Hearing- Request for Determination of Applicability-0 Wyman Road

- **Presentation:** The applicant is requesting to extend the water main along Wyman Road from the intersection of North Street to the entrance of the proposed subdivision road. He stated that the road passes within 100 feet of a bordering vegetated wetland in two places. He stated that straw wattles would be placed on both sides of the road in those areas. He stated that excavated material would go into a dump truck so no soil is left in the roadway and that the trenches would be backfilled with gravel at the end of each day.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Hurley stated that the project looks straightforward and asked that the straw wattles have biodegradable netting. The applicant stated that he would inspect and maintain them until the project is finished.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded for a negative three determination, finding that the work in the request is within the buffer zone as defined in the regulations but will not alter an area subject to protection under the Act, and therefore does not require the filing of a notice of intent subject to the condition that biodegradable straw wattles be used.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Approved with a negative three determination.

8:15 PM: Public Hearing- Request for Determination of Applicability- Waterline Along Lovers Lane

- **Presentation:** A representative of the Department of Public Works is requesting to install a new sidewalk on Lovers Lane from 119 Boston Road to the country club, and also to replace a section of existing sidewalk on Sandy Pond Road from the shopping plaza to Robin Hill Road. He stated that the Lovers Lane section is set back from the road as much as possible with grass strips between the sidewalk and the road in most places, and that any disturbed slopes would be covered.
- **Discussion:**

    - Commissioner Lathrop asked if fill would be needed since some sections have a slope right at the edge of the road. The representative stated that some areas would be filled to level the sidewalk and going at most about 12 feet off the road. Commissioner Lathrop stated that parts of the project are definitely within the 100-foot buffer and possibly the 50-foot buffer, and that he needs a plan showing where and how much fill would be placed and how far it is from the wetland.
    - Commissioner Morrison stated that he believes sidewalks may be exempt under the Wetlands Protection Act as a public safety project. Commissioner Lathrop stated that there are some exemptions for public works, but he was not sure they apply to adding a new sidewalk.
    - The representative stated that he was hoping to get the project done this season and that he would hold off on going back to the engineers until he hears if the project is exempt. Administrator Steeves stated that she would check with DEP on the exemption and look at how a similar sidewalk project was handled in the past.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to continue the hearing to September 22, 2026.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Continued to September 22, 2026 while Administrator Steeves checks with DEP on if the project is exempt.

8:25 PM: Public Hearing- Request for Determination of Applicability- 31 Fitchs Bridge Road

- **Presentation:** The applicant is requesting to build an addition onto the existing house. He stated that a larger project on the property was approved in 2023 but that he now wants to do the work in phases and start with the addition. Administrator Steeves stated that the earlier approval was an order of conditions for rebuilding the house and installing a septic system. She clarified that the addition is what is before the Commission tonight. It was stated that the river is about 200 feet away and that the addition sits back further than the existing house does.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Easom stated that the addition looks to be outside the 100-foot buffer but inside the 200-foot riverfront area. Commissioner Lathrop stated that most of the lot is within the riverfront area, but that the 200-foot line is not shown on the plan. He stated that up to 5,000 square feet of disturbance is allowed in the riverfront area and that the addition is well under that.
    - Commissioner Lathrop stated that he would be more comfortable seeing a plan of the whole lot with the 200-foot line and everything else already built there, such as the driveway, since all of it counts toward the 5,000 square feet. Commissioner Morrison asked if seeing that plan would change his vote, and

Commissioner Lathrop stated that it would not but that it would document things properly.
    - Commissioner Easom stated that work in the riverfront area usually requires showing that there is no other alternative. Commissioner Lathrop stated that he did not believe that applies when the work stays within the 5,000 square feet allowed. Commissioner Easom read from the regulations that up to 5,000 square feet, or 10% of the riverfront area on the lot, whichever is greater, may be allowed on lots recorded on or before October 6, 1997.
    - Chair Smigelski asked if there was room to push the addition back further. Commissioner Lathrop stated that zoning setbacks at the back of the lot may limit that.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded for a negative three determination, finding that the work in the request is within the buffer zone and riverfront area as defined in the regulations but will not alter an area subject to protection under the Act, and therefore does not require the filing of a notice of intent subject to the condition that the work be done as shown on the plan presented at this meeting.
- **Vote**: All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Approved with a negative three determination.

8:35 PM: Request for Certificate of Compliance- 326 Transmission Line- DEP# 169-1284

- **Presentation:** The Commission reviewed site photos, which showed that the biodegradable erosion control socks were breaking down as intended.
- **Discussion:**
    - Commissioner Easom stated that unless anything looked out of place that the Commission should go ahead and issue the certificate of compliance.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to issue a certificate of compliance.
- **Vote**: All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** Certificate of compliance issued.

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2. GENERAL BUSINESS

2.1 GENERAL DISCUSSIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

65 West Main Street Replanting Plan

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves stated that the engineer helping with the replanting plan and the new homeowner were both on Zoom. She stated that the Commission is on board with the updated plant species and that what was still needed

was a plan for making sure that the plants survive, monitoring reports, and details on how the slope would be fixed. The engineer stated that the new owner plans to water the plantings with a hose on a timer at least once a day when they are first planted. He asked what the Commission expects for a maintenance plan. He stated that the slope would be regraded to no steeper than three to one using material brought in with loam added on top for the seed mix.

- **Discussion:**
  - Commissioner Lathrop stated that he was generally okay with where things are, since the plant list was updated and the Commission agreed last time to require six growing seasons. He stated that how the owner waters is up to them since they are responsible for replacing anything that dies.
  - Chair Smigelski asked what would happen to the stumps of the trees that were cut down. Commissioner Lathrop stated that they should be left to rot. Commissioner Easom stated that the smaller stumps cut at a sharp angle could be dangerous if someone fell on them. The Commission agreed that stumps five inches in diameter or less should be cut flat and close to the ground, and the larger stumps left to rot.
  - Administrator Steeves asked if the engineer should put his commitments in writing. Commissioner Lathrop stated that the Commission should instead put the requirements in its own document, approve it, and send it to the owner.
- **Outcome:** Administrator Steeves will draft a document with the Commission's requirements for the Commission to approve at a future meeting. The requirements are to plant according to the approved plant list, monitor and replace anything that dies over six complete growing seasons, submit a monitoring report by November 30th of each year, and to cut any stumps five inches in diameter or less flat and close to the ground.

2.2 COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Commissioner Easom reported that the Community Preservation Plan has been released and asked that the Commission have Administrator Steeves put together an application for Community Preservation Act funds.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to authorize the Administrator to draft a project application for fiscal year 2028 Community Preservation Act funds.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

2.3 LAND MANAGEMENT & ACQUISITION

Approve letter of acceptance of 1.2 acres off Nashua Road

- **Presentation:** Administrator Steeves presented a draft letter accepting land being donated by the developer of the Casella Meadows subdivision. Commissioner Lathrop showed the plans, which include about 15.35 acres on the southern end of the

subdivision and the back portions of two lots, all next to the existing Casella Preserve. It was stated that the parcel numbers are not on the letter yet because the lots have not been subdivided.
    - **Discussion:**
        - Commissioner Easom and Commissioner Lathrop stated that the land would be a great addition to the existing conservation area. Administrator Steeves stated that the developer felt the lots were too big and already bordered conservation land.
        - Chair Smigelski suggested accepting the 1.2 acres on its own, and Administrator Steeves stated that it is all part of one donation.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to accept the three parcels making up the southern portion of the Casella Meadows development.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Outcome:** The three parcels were accepted.

Academy Hill Turtle Nesting

- Commissioner Easom asked for an update. Administrator Steeves stated that she has not yet sent the letter asking the homeowners association for a restoration plan, but that she would send it this week.

309 Boston Road

- Commissioner Easom reported that the clerk magistrate upheld the Commission's fines at the homeowner's appeal hearing. Administrator Steeves stated that the next step is for the court to enforce payment if it is not received within the allowed time. Commissioner Lathrop stated that the Commission should let the court know if payment is not received. Commissioner Easom asked that it be put on the next agenda.

12 Quail Ridge Road

- Commissioner Lathrop asked about the letter sent to 12 Quail Ridge Road, where the owners have been mowing conservation land. Administrator Steeves stated that the letter was sent by certified mail reminding them that it is conservation land, but that there has been no response. Commissioner Lathrop stated that he would stop by to see if the mowing has stopped.

Britt Lane

- Commissioner Lathrop asked about a letter to a Britt Lane property owner who cut down trees between his house and the pond and was required to replant years ago. Administrator Steeves stated that she believes it was sent but will double check.

Commissioner Lathrop stated that the Commission should go out and see how the restoration is going.

0 Lost Lake Drive

- It was reported that the Commission looked at the property during Saturday's site walk. The conservation markers are still there and easy to see but there are plantings behind them in what should be a turtle nesting area, including a large rose of Sharon, which is not native but not invasive. Also, black swallow-wort was found on the southeast side of the property and some stakes with plastic netting were left along the road.
- It was agreed that the rose of Sharon could stay but that the owners should stop mowing and planting behind the markers and leave the mulched area alone so turtles can nest there. Commissioner Lathrop stated that the black swallow-wort needs to be removed very soon since its seed pods are almost mature, and that he would prefer to have the homeowners at a meeting to discuss it.
- **Outcome:** Administrator Steeves will send a letter asking the owners to stop mowing and planting behind the conservation markers, remove the black swallow-wort, and remove the stakes with plastic netting.

2.4 APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of July 14, 2026, as drafted.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of July 28, 2026, as amended.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

2.5 APPROVE INVOICES

- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to pay the Groton Herald invoice in the amount of $120.75.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to pay Resilience Planning and Design for the Open Space and Recreation Plan in the amount of $5,188.75.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to reimburse Paul Funch for the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act filing in the amount of $300.35.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to pay Paul Funch for half of the purchase price of a new trail mower in the amount of $1,750.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT/EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to enter executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21(6), to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate, and not to return to open session.
- **Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVED: 11/10/26